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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/63/430/Add.2)]

63/179. Human rights and unilateral coercive measures

The General Assembly,

Recalling all its previous resolutions on this subject, the most recent of which was resolution 62/162 of 18 December 2007, Human Rights Council resolution 9/4 of 24 September 2008,[1] and previous resolutions of the Council and the Commission on Human Rights,

Reaffirming the pertinent principles and provisions contained in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, in particular article 32 thereof, in which it declared that no State may use or encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General[2] submitted pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 1999/21 of 23 April 1999,[3] and the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 52/120 of 12 December 1997[4] and 55/110 of 4 December 2000,[5]

Stressing that unilateral coercive measures and legislation are contrary to international law, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States,

Recognizing the universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated character of all human rights, and in this regard reaffirming the right to development as an integral part of all human rights,

Recalling the final document of the Fourteenth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Havana on 15 and 16 September

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[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-third Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/63/53/Add.1), chap. I.

[2] A/63/272.

[3] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 3* (E/1999/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[4] A/53/293 and Add.1.

[5] A/56/207 and Add.1.

2006,[6] and the final document of the Fifteenth Ministerial Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Teheran on 29 and 30 July 2008,[7] in which the Ministers of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries agreed to oppose and condemn those measures or laws and their continued application, persevere with efforts to effectively reverse them and urge other States to do likewise, as called for by the General Assembly and other United Nations organs, and to request States applying those measures or laws to revoke them fully and immediately,

Recalling also that at the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, States were called upon to refrain from any unilateral coercive measure not in accordance with international law and the Charter that creates obstacles to trade relations among States and impedes the full realization of all human rights, and also severely threatens the freedom of trade,[8]

Bearing in mind all the references to this question in the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development adopted by the World Summit for Social Development on 12 March 1995,[9] the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women on 15 September 1995,[10] the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements and the Habitat Agenda adopted by the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) on 14 June 1996,[11] and their five-year reviews,

Expressing concern about the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on international relations, trade, investment and cooperation,

Expressing its grave concern that, in some countries, the situation of children is adversely affected by unilateral coercive measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter that create obstacles to trade relations among States, impede the full realization of social and economic development and hinder the well-being of the population in the affected countries, with particular consequences for women and children, including adolescents,

Deeply concerned that, despite the recommendations adopted on this question by the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, the Commission on Human Rights and recent major United Nations conferences, and contrary to general international law and the Charter, unilateral coercive measures continue to be promulgated and implemented with all their negative implications for the social humanitarian activities and economic and social development of developing countries, including their extraterritorial effects, thereby creating additional obstacles to the full enjoyment of all human rights by peoples and individuals under the jurisdiction of other States,

Bearing in mind all the extraterritorial effects of any unilateral legislative, administrative and economic measures, policies and practices of a coercive nature against the development process and the enhancement of human rights in

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[6] A/61/472-S/2006/780, annex I.

[7] A/62/929, annex I.

[8] See A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

[9] *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6–12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[10] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[11] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, 3–14 June 1996* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.97.IV.6), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

developing countries, which create obstacles to the full realization of all human rights,

Reaffirming that unilateral coercive measures are a major obstacle to the implementation of the Declaration on the Right to Development,[12]

Recalling article 1, paragraph 2, common to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights[13] and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,[13] which provides, inter alia, that in no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence,

Noting the continuing efforts of the open-ended Working Group on the Right to Development of the Human Rights Council, and reaffirming in particular its criteria, according to which unilateral coercive measures are one of the obstacles to the implementation of the Declaration on the Right to Development,

1. *Urges* all States to cease adopting or implementing any unilateral measures not in accordance with international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States, in particular those of a coercive nature with all their extraterritorial effects, which create obstacles to trade relations among States, thus impeding the full realization of the rights set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[14] and other international human rights instruments, in particular the right of individuals and peoples to development;

2. *Also urges* all States not to adopt any unilateral measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter that impede the full achievement of economic and social development by the population of the affected countries, in particular children and women, that hinder their well-being and that create obstacles to the full enjoyment of their human rights, including the right of everyone to a standard of living adequate for his or her health and well-being and his or her right to food, medical care and the necessary social services, as well as to ensure that food and medicine are not used as tools for political pressure;

3. *Strongly objects* to the extraterritorial nature of those measures which, in addition, threaten the sovereignty of States, and in this context calls upon all Member States to neither recognize those measures nor to apply them, as well as to take administrative or legislative measures, as appropriate, to counteract the extraterritorial applications or effects of unilateral coercive measures;

4. *Condemns* the continued unilateral application and enforcement by certain Powers of unilateral coercive measures, and rejects those measures with all their extraterritorial effects as being tools for political or economic pressure against any country, in particular against developing countries, adopted with a view to preventing those countries from exercising their right to decide, of their own free will, their own political, economic and social systems, and because of the negative effects of those measures on the realization of all the human rights of vast sectors of their populations, in particular children, women and the elderly;

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[12] Resolution 41/128, annex.

[13] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[14] Resolution 217 A (III).

5. *Reaffirms* that essential goods such as food and medicines should not be used as tools for political coercion and that under no circumstances should people be deprived of their own means of subsistence and development;

6. *Calls upon* Member States that have initiated such measures to abide by the principles of international law, the Charter, the declarations of the United Nations and world conferences and relevant resolutions and to commit themselves to their obligations and responsibilities arising from the international human rights instruments to which they are party by revoking such measures at the earliest possible time;

7. *Reaffirms*, in this context, the right of all peoples to self-determination, by virtue of which they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development;

8. *Recalls* that, according to the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, contained in the annex to General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV) of 24 October 1970, and the relevant principles and provisions contained in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States proclaimed by the Assembly in its resolution 3281 (XXIX), in particular article 32 thereof, no State may use or encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights and to secure from it advantages of any kind;

9. *Rejects* all attempts to introduce unilateral coercive measures, and urges the Human Rights Council to take fully into account the negative impact of those measures, including through the enactment of national laws and their extraterritorial application which are not in conformity with international law, in its task concerning the implementation of the right to development;

10. *Requests* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in discharging her functions relating to the promotion, realization and protection of the right to development and bearing in mind the continuing impact of unilateral coercive measures on the population of developing countries, to give priority to the present resolution in her annual report to the General Assembly;

11. *Underlines* that unilateral coercive measures are one of the major obstacles to the implementation of the Declaration on the Right to Development,[12] and in this regard calls upon all States to avoid the unilateral imposition of economic coercive measures and the extraterritorial application of domestic laws which run counter to the principles of free trade and hamper the development of developing countries, as recognized by the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on the Right to Development;

12. *Recognizes* that in the Declaration of Principles adopted at the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003,[15] States were strongly urged to avoid and refrain from any unilateral measure in building the information society;

13. *Supports* the invitation of the Human Rights Council to all special rapporteurs and existing thematic mechanisms of the Council in the field of economic, social and cultural rights to pay due attention, within the scope of their

[15] A/C.2/59/3, annex, chap. I, sect. A.

respective mandates, to the negative impact and consequences of unilateral coercive measures;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of all Member States, to continue to collect their views and information on the implications and negative effects of unilateral coercive measures on their populations and to submit an analytical report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, while reiterating once again the need to highlight the practical and preventive measures in this respect;

15. *Decides* to examine the question on a priority basis at its sixty-fourth session under the sub-item entitled "Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms".

70th plenary meeting
18 December 2008